



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW:

Today, North Carolina has eight state-recognized American Indian tribes: Coharie Tribe, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe, Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, Meherrin Indian Tribe, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Sappony, and Waccamaw Siouan Tribe.

Powwows are one way that American Indians in North Carolina (and many other states!) continue to express their culture. *Powwow* comes from a Narragansett word referring to a curing ceremony. Although modern powwows may be held to honor an individual or to mark a special occasion, they are usually social gatherings that celebrate and honor American Indian tribal identities and traditions through music, dance, and community.

Music for powwows is provided by drums—sometimes as many as 20 people playing one large drum—and dances feature many different styles. Dances for men include Northern Traditional, Fancy, Grass, Chicken, Southern Straight, and Eastern Woodland Traditional. Some of the dances for women include Northern Traditional, Jingle, Fancy, Southern Traditional, and Eastern Blanket.

This month's book, *Jingle Dancer*, tells the story of Jenna, an American Indian girl who would like to participate in the next powwow as a Jingle dancer.

Jingle dresses generally consist of a solid color fabric and have hundreds of jingles that are sewn onto the dress or are sewn onto ribbons that become part of the dancer's regalia. Most jingles are made from silver, tin, or aluminum. With a dancer's flowing, bouncing steps, the metal jingles move together to make a singing "jingle" noise. Sometimes the sound reminds people of rain falling on a tin roof.

BOOK OF THE MONTH:

Jingle Dancer by Cynthia Leitich Smith (HarperCollins, 2000)

“Jenna loves the tradition of jingle dancing that has been shared by generations of women in her family, and she hopes to dance at the next powwow. But she has a problem: how will her dress sing if it has no jingles? She’ll borrow, of course, from Great-Aunt Sis, Mrs. Scott, Cousin Elizabeth—and Grandma, who will also help Jenna sew the jingles to her dress, assemble her regalia, and practice her bounce-steps. When the big day arrives, Jenna will proudly carry on the family tradition.”

LEXILE MEASURE:

710L

AVAILABLE FROM:

- [NC Public Library](#)
- [Amazon](#)

VOCABULARY:

1. *culture* — a language, custom, idea, or practice that is shared by a group of people
2. *traditions* — knowledge, beliefs, or customs that are handed down from one generation to another
3. *regalia* — special clothes that are used for ceremonies
4. *community* — a group of people who live close together or have shared, common interests
5. *celebrate* — to do something special in order to honor a person or an occasion

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is a tradition?
2. Do you have traditions in your families? What are they?
3. How did the Jenna’s family and friends help her make her dress?
4. When do you think *Jingle Dancer* takes place? Was it a long time ago or recently?



5. What does **regalia** mean? How does **regalia** differ from costumes?
[Costumes are what people wear when they are pretending to be something they are not; regalia is clothing for American Indians based on clothing worn by their ancestors. Like all clothing and fashion, regalia changes over time, to use more contemporary materials and methods of creation. Many American Indians make their own regalia.]

ACTIVITIES:

- [Jingle Dancer Coloring Sheet](#)
- [Turtle Rattle Craft](#)
- Watch some American Indian dancers from North Carolina perform a Jingle dance in the video recording below (40:32–43:16). This performance was recorded at the North Carolina Museum of History’s annual American Indian Heritage Celebration in 2018.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_DOW_7nhJ4&list=PL2pN1beRTtQUHuyTmdJ1RdcD-esid8C9&index=8

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- ***LIVE!*** streaming program

[American Indians in North Carolina: Past and Present](#)

Thursday, November 7, 2019, 10:15–11:15 a.m.

Watch **LIVE!** as we explore the 1,000-year-old Town Creek Indian Mound, located in Montgomery County. Who were the people who lived here and what were their lives like? Why did they leave the region and where did they go? How are they represented in our state today? With the help of special guests from North Carolina American Indian tribes and site staff, we’ll investigate those questions and learn about the first peoples of our past and today.

- **Distance Learning on Demand Enrichment Class**

[American Indians in North Carolina](#)

Explore the fascinating history and contemporary culture of North Carolina’s American Indian communities. Students will learn and share information about



the state's tribes through small group activities, video clips, and class discussion. Grades 3–5.

- **Video on Demand**

American Indians in North Carolina

Meet members of North Carolina's eight state-recognized tribes and learn more about the history and contemporary culture of North Carolina's American Indian communities. Program length: approx. 10 minutes.

